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TWO FAMOUS CUP DEFENDERS

Here's Columbia and Brittonia! Yes, forever and awhile!
May each sweet face with loving looks reflect the other's smile;
For Common Speech and Love and Law and Christian code they've got,
And yet Columbia always has the most un-common yacht.

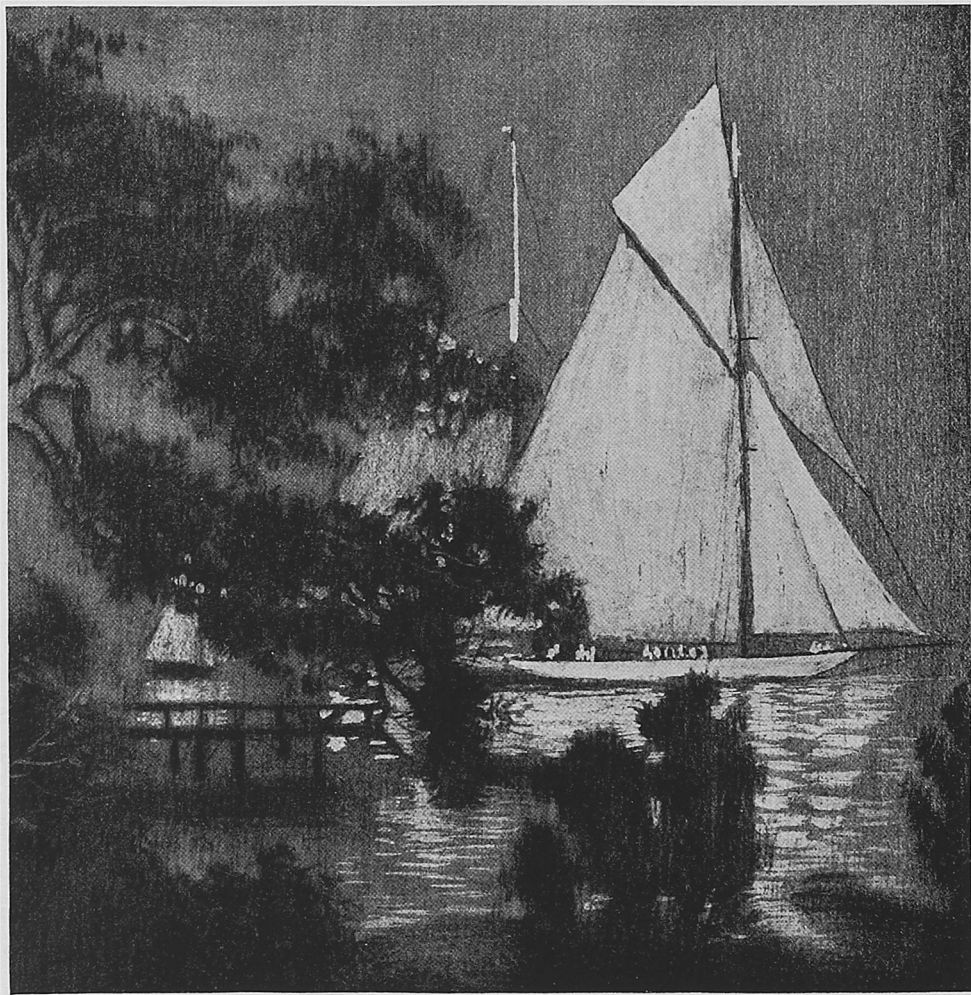
AND a most uncommon yacht was Columbia, the successful cup defender of 1899 and 1901. In the picture opposite this page the sloop is shown off New Rochelle and about to get under way. The peacefulness and quiet charm of the scene makes this painting by Mr. Chapman a most unusual yachting picture; while his quick, nervous sketch, which appears at the end of this article, of the great Vigilant-Valkyrie II race, October 13, 1893, is a fine tour de force.

That race was sailed in a heavy blow—Valkyrie weather. The east wind showed no respect for either boat. It shrilled through their rigging, rolled big waves over their plunging hulls, and swept green, spray-fringed carpets on to their decks. Life lines were rigged for the crews. Valkyrie was quicker at the start and not only that, leading into a sea that sent the spray dashing halfway up her mast, she kept Vigilant at her mercy to windward, and showed the best work of her American career. Vigilant, however, had been in trouble with her center-board, a fact that led to the abandonment of the center-board type in future races for the America's cup.

The turn was made with Valkyrie nearly two minutes ahead. It looked then like her race, for she had beaten

Vigilant to the outer mark and wind and sea were still to her taste. But Vigilant's turn came with the run home. Away sped Valkyrie with sails bearing on the sticks like mad. A big spinnaker was set. But a little hole seemed started in it like a ravel in a stocking. It spread in a minute and the whole sail was burst asunder. A second spinnaker was set. That, too, soon blew into fragments, and while a third spreader was being set, Vigilant passed and outsailed her rival, and won the race with forty seconds to spare.

It has been said that Vigilant won this race on her sails; but sails that hold in a blow and do not start little holes like a "ravel in a stocking," are part of the test of a race. Moreover, Vigilant had trouble with one of her own sails and the manner in which she met it materially contributed to her victory. At a critical moment the tack of Vigilant's gaff-topsail gave way and the lower part of the sail blew out and let the wind out. It looked then as if the race were surely lost. Thousands of onlookers on the accompanying fleet gave up. But Vigilant sent a man up to seize on a new halliard and halliard block, then hoisted her club-topsail outside of the gaff-topsail—a brilliant manœuvre that was executed in a howl-



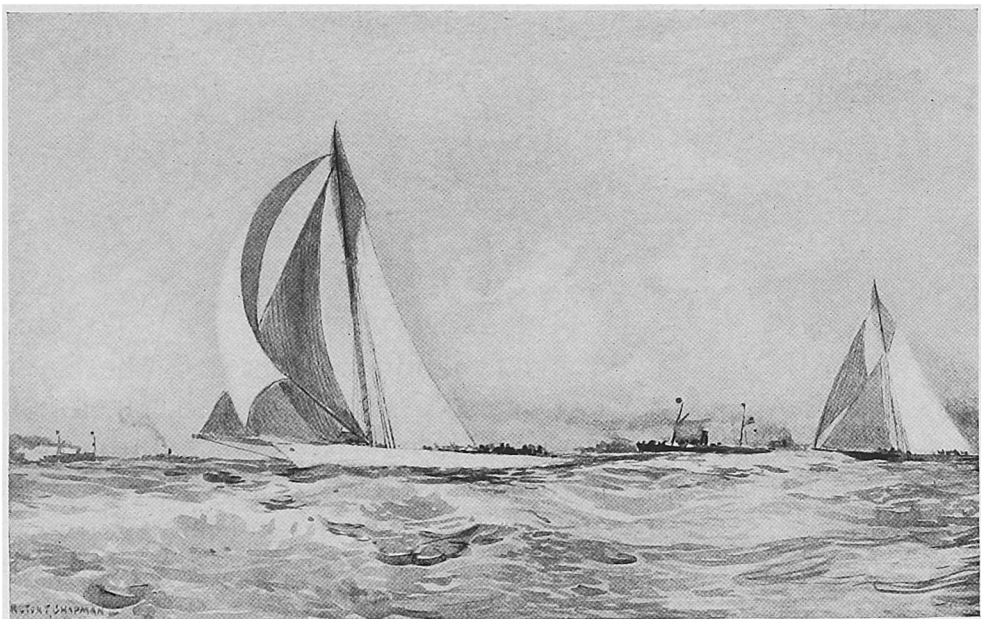
Columbia, off Premium Point
Getting up Sail

ing gale and sent a thrill of pride in American seamanship through everyone who witnessed it.

Columbia's finest race and one of the greatest in the whole America's Cup series, was that in which she beat Shamrock II, September 28th, 1901. "Blow up the yachts and sink the sea!" exclaimed a witness of the race in the "N. Y. Herald's" boat. For the racing world has seen the best of both — a boom-to-boom struggle around a thirty mile course and at the finish only thirty-five hurrying seconds between the flying defender and the hard driven challenger. And throughout the deciding minutes of that driving finish tens of thousands held their breath to give voice to the skies when Columbia's jibboom went spearing across the line some three minutes ahead of Shamrock II.

The cup, won by the schooner yacht America in 1851, never has left this

country. It originated in a letter written in 1850 by an English merchant to his friends in America, suggesting that one of New York's famous pilot boats be sent to England to take part in yacht races to be sailed during the time of the international exposition to be held in London in 1851. In reply, a syndicate of members of the New York Yacht Club built the schooner America, of 170 tons measurement. This yacht arrived at Cowes, England, July 31, 1851, and on August 22 sailed against fifteen yachts belonging to the Royal Yacht Squadron in a race around the Isle of Wight. The prize, a silver cup, which the Royal Yacht Squadron had offered for a race free to the yachts of all nations, was won by America. Her owner presented this cup (July 8, 1857) to the New York Yacht Club to be held thereafter as the trophy of the yachting supremacy of the world.



Vigilant

Corsair I

Valkyrie II

Vigilant Defeating Valkyrie II